

**NATIONAL EXAMINER APPRENTICE PROGRAM**  
**GENERAL INFORMATION ON PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

Thank you for your interest in the National Testing program. The current roster of National examiners is made up of knowledgeable horse people who also have strong ties to Pony Club. Examiners are assigned to each test at the C-3 level, B level, and the A level . At each test, one examiner is designated as the PIP (Primus Inter Pares, or “first among equals”), with overall responsibility for the conduct of the test and for the paperwork.

The following outlines the progression from application to the Apprentice Program to appointment as a National Examiner:

**Progression of National Examiners**

L-1 (T-C3, HB)

L-2 (T-B, SJ-C3, D-C3)

L-3 (T-A, T-HA, SJ-B, D-B)

L-4 (SJ-A, D-A)

- 1. To qualify for a level you must have: Ridden, Trained, Competed and or Officiated in the level you are requesting.**
  
2. Potential applicants request the information packet and application forms for being an Apprentice by either calling the National Office or downloading them from the USPC website at [www.ponyclub.org](http://www.ponyclub.org).  
  
*The applicant is responsible for procuring references from three people of their choice. References can be from current NE’s, DC’s RS’s, I-0, or clinicians and trainers. It is not the National Testing Committee’s responsibility to collect references. Without completed reference forms, applications for apprenticeship will not be considered.*
  
3. When received, the application is reviewed and processed, and references are confirmed.
  
4. The applicant is notified of acceptance or non-acceptance. Successful applicants will receive:
  - ◆ Test schedule for current testing season.
  - ◆ Complete set of current rating standards and sample test sheets for each level.
  - ◆ Copy of Apprentice Evaluation form.
  - ◆ Copy of Candidate Information currently in use by the National Office.
  - ◆ Copy of the National Examiner’s Handbook.

5. Those accepted, as an Apprentice will then receive information about the test(s) for which he/she is scheduled.

**Note:** Apprentices advise the NE Apprentice Coordinator of their availability for testing. The Apprentice Coordinator then assigns your test(s). It is the Apprentice’s responsibility to contact and confirm with the National Office their assigned test(s).

6. At the conclusion of the testing season, each Apprentice will be evaluated and notified of his/her status:

- ◆ Certification as a National Examiner
- ◆ Continuation of apprenticeship
- ◆ Temporary inactive status (if requested by Apprentice)
- ◆ Discontinuation of apprenticeship

## POLICIES

The following policies apply during the apprenticeship phase. Exceptions to these policies will be considered on an individual basis by the Coordinator of Apprentices or by the PIP at a testing.

1. All Apprentices must be at least 26 years of age and will not be approved as a National Examiner until 26 years of age.
2. Apprentices applying for the L-1 status must be active in C2 testing and/or have been a C-2 examiner for a minimum of 3 years.
3. Apprentices are responsible for any expenses of their travel, lodging and meals incurred in conjunction with a testing assignment. However, the test host is asked to include apprentices in local arrangements as much as possible.
4. L-1 Apprentices must apprentice at least 2 C-3 tests and 2 HB level tests. Traditional B, H/H-A, and A level may be asked to apprentice one test at each level. Specialty Examiners may or may not be asked to apprentice. After you have apprenticed the required tests and evaluation have been gathered you will be considered for level of National Examiner you have applied and apprenticed for.
5. Apprentices should notify the Coordinator of Apprentices of his/her test assignment requests.
6. No more than one apprentice will be assigned to any one test.
7. Upon receiving a testing assignment, it is the apprentice's responsibility to:
  - ◆ Let the Instruction Services Department at the USPC National Office and the Apprentice Coordinator know which testings he/she would like to attend.
  - ◆ Contact the test organizer to confirm the test schedule and introduce him/herself.
  - ◆ Contact the PIP of the assigned test to discuss the role of an apprentice and any special circumstances.
  - ◆ Review the candidate roster for assigned testing (see Policy 8).
  - ◆ Let test organizer and PIP know arrival plans, etc.
8. If the Apprentice knows or has instructed any of the candidates at an assigned test please let the PIP and Apprentice Coordinator know immediately to discuss the advisability of apprenticing at or withdrawing from that test.
9. The PIP has the authority to excuse any apprentice disrupting National Examiner/Candidate rapport and/or conduct of the test.
10. Apprentices must attend the entire test, including the briefing/evening meeting for examiners and candidates prior to the test.
11. Apprentices wishing to cancel from a test must notify the National Office, Apprentice Coordinator, PIP and test organizer immediately.

12. Dress for apprentices should be conservative and appropriate (khakis, no shorts, shirts with sleeves, appropriate footwear).
13. Apprentices may attend any test as an observer, but may only attend as an apprentice where officially assigned.
14. Apprentices must provide their own clipboard, pencils, etc.
15. Once accepted into the program, apprenticeship must be completed within two years

### **SCHEDULING**

1. To keep expenses to a minimum, Apprentices will be assigned to tests as close to their home as possible.
2. When an Apprentice has been assigned to a test, and has confirmed the assignment, the Coordinator will notify the National Office (Instruction Services Department). The National Office will then notify the Organizer and PIP and send appropriate evaluation forms. The Apprentice **is responsible** for contacting the Organizer and the PIP for details regarding the test.
3. Apprentices should arrange to arrive at the test site in time to become acquainted with the Regional Supervisor, Test Organizer, National Examiners, etc., before the test begins.
4. If, for any reason, the Apprentice cannot attend an assigned testing, he/she **must notify** the Apprentice Coordinator, PIP, test organizer **and** the National Office as far in advance as possible.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### Qualities of a National Examiner

National Examiners play a vital role in the functioning and image of The United States Pony Clubs. They may be among the very few representatives of the "National" organization to visit some regions and, as such, act as ambassadors whose image extends beyond testing. Examiners must be sympathetic to and enjoy working with young people, particularly those in the 14-25 age bracket. They must be currently active in the horse world and have a good understanding of Pony Club programs and goals, and of the Standards of Proficiency. It is important that they have the confidence to apply their knowledge in a tactful, diplomatic way while exercising excellent judgment. Equally important qualities are leadership ability, flexibility and *a sense of humor!*

#### Role of the Apprentice

The primary role of the Apprentice is to listen and observe. Although each testing situation is different, standard procedures are followed which have proven to be fair, efficient, and effective.

The PIP will give direction and guidance to the Apprentice, who may not make comments in front of candidates or ask them questions unless requested to do so by the PIP.

Apprentices must not interfere with, or distract in any way, the rapport between National Examiner and candidate.

Clothing should be conservative, workmanlike, and professional, with appropriate footwear. Apprentices should come prepared for inclement weather. (Khakis and paddock boots are recommended.)

In addition to accepting test assignments, Apprentices should seek further opportunities to gain experience. Assisting with horse management judging at Regional and Inter-Regional competitions, working at the USPC Festival, and conducting lower level ratings (D1 – C2) are just a few ways to gain valuable insight into the workings of Pony Club and the expectations at different rating levels.

Apprentices should familiarize themselves with all materials sent to them by the Coordinator of Apprentices and National Office and promptly respond to any communications.

Upon completion of an assignment, the Apprentice should express appreciation, not only personally, but also in writing, to anyone (Organizer, RS, DC, local host, etc.) who has been particularly helpful.

Completion of the basic requirements of apprenticeship does not automatically guarantee National Examiner status. Depending upon performance and evaluations, an Apprentice may be invited to become a National Examiner or may be asked to continue as an Apprentice to improve certain skills. Recognizing that not everyone possesses the qualities to be a National Examiner, the National Testing Committee retains the right to ask an Apprentice to withdraw from the program at any time.

For further information or assistance, please contact the Coordinator of Apprentices:  
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